

Reading Toolkit: Grade 4 Objective 2.A.6.e

Standard 2.0 Comprehension of Informational Text

Topic A. Comprehension of Informational Text

Indicator 6. Read critically to evaluate informational text

Objective e. Identify and explain information not included in the text

Assessment Limits:

Information that would enhance or clarify the reader's understanding of the main idea of the text or a portion of the text

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Connections between the main idea and information not included in the text

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Lesson Seeds

Reading Grade 4 Objective 2.A.6.e

Activities

The teacher will provide students with an informational text. Both teacher and students will read the text, and the teacher will state the main idea of the text for students. Next, the teacher will indicate a portion of the text and offer students some choices of information that might help a reader better understand that portion of the text. The teacher and student will discuss the choices and decide upon the piece of information that would most help a reader and why that piece would be more helpful than the other choices. With repeated practices, students should ultimately be able to identify the main idea themselves and determine without a set of choices what information would clarify a student's understanding.

The teacher will provide students with an informational passage about a topic which while appropriate is not a familiar one. The teacher and students should read the passage together the first time, and the teacher should identify the main idea for the students. Next, students should reread the passage and use sticky notes to mark portions of the passage about which there is not full understanding. From a list of informational aids provided by the teacher, students must select one and explain how adding this aid to the text would help a reader's understanding. Ultimately, a student should be able to identify the main idea him/herself and determine without the use of a list the information most likely to help a reader understand the text.

The teacher will provide students an informational text from which all informational aids have been removed. Students will be directed to read the text and as they read record any questions they have about the content of the text. Next, the teacher should provide students with the original text, which contains the informational aids. Then students should read the original version to determine if the informational aids answered their questions. If their questions were answered, students should be able to discuss the importance of informational aids to their understanding of a text. If their questions were not answered, students should suggest additional aids that would enhance their understanding of the text.

After reading an informational selection, students will complete a chart like the one below.

Topic	Information Learned	Questions I Still Have

In small groups, students will discuss their chart and compile a chart of the information that would have been helpful in clarifying the text. Each of these charts should be displayed in the room, and students can take a "gallery walk" to read each group's suggestions and place a check mark beside those with which they agree. A final class discussion will consolidate those informational pieces that if added to the text would assist a reader's understanding.

Clarification

Reading Grade 4 Indicator 2.A.6

To show proficiency of **critical evaluation of informational text**, a reader must form a number of judgments about a text. To begin this process a reader must preview the text and its features and combine that information with prior knowledge to set a purpose for reading. During and after reading, the evaluation of informational text requires a reader to **determine the content of the text, the role of text features, text elements that make that text a reliable source, the author's opinion, argument, or position, the effectiveness and purpose of the author's word choice, and the effectiveness of the author's style**. A full evaluation of an informational text requires attention to each of these elements.

To begin a critical evaluation of informational text, a reader must use prior knowledge and preview the text to establish a purpose for reading. Once a purpose is established, that is followed by a close reading of the text. Next, a reader must judge how well the text provides information for the stated purpose for reading. Then a critical reader should be able to verbalize or scribe an explanation or analysis of the text by focusing on specific sections of that text and detailing how that **information meets or does not meet a stated purpose for reading**.

If that purpose is not met, a critical reader should be able to **identify those pieces of information that are needed to fully construct meaning**. Additional information may include more details within the text, more text features, or adjustments to the organizational pattern or existing text features. To determine what is required for meaning, a critical reader should closely read the existing text and then assess the degree to which the text meets a reader's purpose. A reader should note particularly the organizational pattern of the text and see how well that pattern helps a reader construct meanings from important ideas in the text. Those gaps in information that make it difficult for a reader to construct meaning signal the types of additional information that are needed.

The **analysis of informational text for reliability** is an important aspect in the text's critical evaluation. A reader must first discern how much of the text is factual. Once the factual information is isolated, judgments about its accuracy are necessary. A reader should access information about the author and his/her credentials as a means of assessing the passage's reliability. Depending upon the subject of the text and how current the information is also a reliability factor. When available, a reader can access other texts on the same subject to see if there is a consistency in the information. Finally after looking at multiple texts on the same subject, a reader can determine if the initial text contains the same information as the subsequent texts or if the initial text presents information not contained in the others. A discrepancy in information could point to an inaccuracy in a text or to a more current source of information.

Once reliability has been established, a reader should carefully note elements of text that address the **author's argument or produce clarity of the author's position on the topic**. Additionally, a reader should be attuned to **elements of bias** in the author's presentation of material. After reading is complete, a reader must implicitly understand the stated or implied main idea of the text. From that basis of understanding, a reader should look at the construction of the author's argument, noting any evidence of bias in the argument and looking for a fair treatment of opposing views on the topic. At that juncture a reader should be able to judge the impartiality of the material or the inclination of the author to present a single view of the topic. Based on that text evidence, a reader can make a critical decision about the text's fullness or limits of use to him/herself.

After a reader knows how useful a text might be, a determination can be made about what **additional information could help a reader construct meaning from the text**. Active reading skills will allow a reader to note a stated or implied main idea in the text. Then a reader can identify additional information that would add to, clarify, or strengthen their understanding of the text or the author's viewpoint. A reader's suggestions for additional information could include, but not be limited to

- Text features such as bulleted lists, captions, graphics, italicized or bold print etc.
- Information to address readers' questions that were not answered in the text
- Context clues, footnotes, or glossed words to help a reader understand unfamiliar words and phrases

A critical evaluation of a text also demands that a reader detect **words that authors use to affect a reader's feelings**. A critical reader can determine a reason for the author's word choice and the response the author wished to evoke. At the center of any persuasive text is a strong opinion, and authors use words to their advantage to create a strong emotional appeal to a reader. Repetition, rhetorical questions, hyperbole etc...all have the power to sway a reader's perceptions. A critical reader is aware of the power of words and examines this word choice to discern the author's tone. For example, a critical reader should be able to discern the difference in tone between "The hero was brave as he flew into the battle alone." from "The pilot was foolhardy flying into battle without cover." A critical reader must also note the portion of text where repetitions occur and determine why an author would wish to draw attention to that portion of text. Critical readers are aware of these elements and should be able to determine if they enhance an author's viewpoint. Finally critical readers should isolate elements that are used purely for emotional appeal and are not supported by fact.

Ultimately a critical reader should be able to **analyze an author's style** which is how an author uses language to relay ideas. An author's particular style has a direct effect upon the meaning of a text. For example, authors may use formal language to convey the seriousness of material or informal language to address the entertainment value of a topic. Or an author may use an informal style with a serious topic to evoke a particular response and cause a critical reader to consider why an author would not match style to topic. That disconnect between style and topic has a critical effect upon construction of meaning. A critical reader should also note how the author forms and uses sentences. The constant use of long, involved sentences or short, choppy sentences or a combination of both can alert a reader to a variety of emphases within a text. An author might use this stylistic formula to draw attention to a particular idea or to diminish the effect of an idea. Using sentence fragments is another way authors can achieve those same effects. Finally a critical reader should be aware that how the author uses language, makes choices about words, and constructs sentences that are planned so that a critical reader can develop insight into the author's intended meaning of a text.

Sample Item #1 Brief Constructed Response (BCR) Item with Annotated Student Responses

Question

Read the article 'Vroooooom'. Then answer the following.

After reading "Vroooooom," what question might a reader still have about junior drag racing? In your response, use information from the article that explains why a reader might still have that question. Write your answer on your answer document.

Annotated Student Responses

Why is it called Junior Drag Racing when
theres no dragging in it?

Annotation: The student responds by stating the question "Why is it called Junior Drag Racing when theres no dragging in it?" The student shows that he/she has read both the BCR and the passage. To improve this response, the student needs to reference the text where statements about drag racing are given and indicate that there is no information about why the term "drag" is used and there is not an indication that anything is being dragged. Next the student needs to explain why the information would be interesting, useful, or how it might help a student better understand the passage.

I think a reader might want to know if you have to travel long distances to get to the races? They might want to know this because maybe that person doesn't like to travel. Or with the high gas prices their parents might not approve. And maybe they wanted relatives to come but if it's too far they can't come.

Annotation: The student responds by stating the question "...want to know if you have to travel long distances to get to the races?" Next, the student continues with reasons for wanting that question answered. "...maybe that person doesn't like to travel. Or with the high gas prices their parent might not approve. And maybe they wanted relatives to come but if it's too far they can't come." While all the ideas are reasonable, they are not text-based. To improve this response, the reader could reference the text stating where drag racing competitions are held and where some drag racers live. From this text support, the reader should indicate why knowing where races are held and their distances from home are important.

What if both cars didn't make the estimate? Does
the racer whos the closest wins or mabe no one wins
at all? In the third paragh it does say about the
estimate but does not talk about if both don't
make the estimate.

Annotation: The student responds with the question "What if both cars didn't make the estimate?" Then the student continues with a suggestion about the closest racer winning or not having a winner at all and concludes the response with an indication that paragraph three of the passage does talk about "the estimate" but not exceptions to that rule. The student does answer the question and offers minimal text support from paragraph three. To improve this response, the student should expand the text support by explaining what the estimate is and how having an answer to the stated question is important to an understanding of jr. drag racing.

Handouts

Vroooooom

Margaret Mickelway writes about a wild new sport for girls and boys. Read about junior drag racing in this article called "Vroooooom" from National Geographic World magazine.

¹Sick of slow? There's a hot new sport for kids that will put your life in the fast lane. It's called junior (jr.) drag racing, and it gives kids as young as 8 a chance to develop topnotch driving skills

²Girls and boys, ages 8 to 17, have been revving up for league competition at racetracks around the United States for the last three years. In jr. drag racing, two cars at a time race each other down an eighth-mile strip—a straight track a little longer than two football fields. The cars look almost like the ones the pros drive, but jr. cars are half as big. Their smaller engines are generally propelled by alcohol or gasoline.

Drivers go up to 60 miles an hour. The real test isn't only speed, however, but split-second timing. Each driver must start and finish the race within an estimated time for his or her car. Going faster than estimated or too slow can bring a loss to a racer.

Young drivers get instruction at the track, then take part in a series of competitions to qualify for major meets. At every jr. drag meet safety is the number one concern. Accidents are rare. Track conditions, car equipment, and safety gear are all strictly regulated.

In the summer of 1994, 500 of the best racers competed at the Inaugural Jr. Drag Racing National Championships, at Indianapolis Raceway Park in Indianapolis, Indiana. The champs were the Houston Half-Scale Team, from Houston Raceway Park in Baytown, Texas. The 10-member team beat out 59 other groups—and had an individual winner, Mark Lowry, 16, of Baytown; and a runner-up, Erica Enders, 10, of Houston.

What gets a kid into racing? For many it's a family thing. "My dad raced before I was born," explains Erica. "My dad worked as pit crew," says Mitch Elliott, 12, of Woodstock, Ontario, in Canada. The college scholarship prizes attract others. But for J. R. Todd, 13, a racer from Lawrenceburg, Indiana, there are greater attractions. "What do I like?...It's the people, the excitement," he says.

Rubric - Brief Constructed Response (BCR)

Score 3

The response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text.

- Addresses the demands of the question
- Effectively uses text-relevant¹ information to clarify or extend understanding

Score 2

The response demonstrates a general understanding of the text.

- Partially addresses the demands of the question
- Uses text-relevant¹ information to show understanding

Score 1

The response demonstrates a minimal understanding of the text.

- Minimally addresses the demands of the question
- Uses minimal information to show some understanding of the text in relation to the question

Score 0

The response is completely incorrect, irrelevant to the question, or missing.²

Notes:

¹ Text-relevant: This information may or may not be an exact copy (quote) of the text but is clearly related to the text and often shows an analysis and/or interpretation of important ideas. Students may incorporate information to show connections to relevant prior experience as appropriate.

² An exact copy (quote) or paraphrase of the question that provides no new relevant information will receive a score of "0".

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